GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:171
ANSWERED ON:02.02.2017
Conservation of Ground Water
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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prepared a basic framework for the draft model Act/policy aimed at conserving ground, surface and rain water, thereby stressing on using treated water optimally;
(b) if so, the details thereof; and
(c) the steps taken by the Government to conserve fast depleting ground water levels through aquifer recharge in the country particularly drought-hit areas such as Marathwada and Bundelkhand?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION
(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)
(a) & (b) Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR has formulated the National Water Policy (2012) formulated which, inter-alia, advocates conservation, promotion and protection of water and highlights the need for augmenting the availability of water through rain water harvesting, direct use of rainfall and other management measures. The National Water Policy (2012) has been forwarded to all State Governments/ UTs and concerned Ministries/ Departments of Central Government for adoption.

Besides, the Union Government circulated a Model Bill in 1970 to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for its regulation and development, which included provision for rain water harvesting. The Model Bill was re-circulated in 1992, 1996 and again in 2005 for adoption. The Model Bill stipulates:
â€¢ Establishing of State Ground Water Authorities to frame policies for administration of the legislation.
â€¢ Empowering State/UT Government to control and/or regulate the abstraction of ground water.
Requiring users of ground water to seek permission from the State Ground Water Authority to sink a well in the notified area.
â€¢ Mandatory provision for construction of artificial recharge structures of appropriate size by the ground water user seeking permission for sinking of wells.
â€¢ In the revised Model Bill circulated in 2005, a new chapter on Rain Water Harvesting for Recharge to ground water was introduced. So far, 15 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the lines of Model bill.

(c) Steps taken by Central Government to conserve depleting ground water levels in the Country, inter-alia, include :
â€¢ "Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water in India" has been prepared, which envisages construction of different types of Artificial Recharge and Rainwater Harvesting structures in the Country including Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. The Master Plan has been circulated to all States/ UTs for implementation.
â€¢ Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has implemented demonstrative artificial recharge project during XI plan period in 22 States for replication of the same by State Governments. One such project was taken up in Mauranipur of Jhansi district in Bundelkhand region.
â€¢ Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has issued advisories to States and UTs to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water / rain water harvesting. 30 States/UTs including Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra have made rain water harvesting mandatory by enacting laws or by formulating rules & regulations or by including provisions in Building bye-laws or through suitable Government Orders.
â€¢ Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for its regulation and development which includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 15 States/UTs including Maharashtra have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the lines of Model bill.
â€¢ CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management programme during XII Plan, under the scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation. The Aquifer Mapping is aimed to delineate aquifer disposition and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/area specific ground water management plans, with community participation. The areas where Aquifer Mapping and Management programme is being taken up include 4 districts in Marathwada region and 8 districts in Bundelkhand regions.
â€¢ Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR has also launched 'Jal Kranti Abhiyan' (2015-16 to 2017-18) in order to consolidate water conservation and management in the Country including Marathwada and Bundelkhand regions through a holistic and integrated approach involving all stakeholders, making it a mass movement.
â€¢ CGWB has been organizing mass awareness programmes in the Country including Marathwada and Bundelkhand regions to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.
â€¢ Special focus is given through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for water conservation and water harvesting structures to augment ground water. In addition, priority has been given for construction of farm ponds in the year 2016-17 to harvest rain water.
â€¢ The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has suggested all States to adopt water conservation measures like roof top rainwater harvesting, erecting sustainability structures for water conservation etc. For creating such sustainability structures, 10 % of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) funds are provided to the States.
â€¢ Department of Land Resources is currently implementing 8214 watershed development projects in 28 States covering an area of about 39.07 million ha. under the Watershed Development Component (WDC) of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana

(PMKSY) principally for development of rainfed portions of net cultivated area and culturable wastelands. The major activities taken up under the WDC-PMKSY, inter-alia, include ridge area treatment, drainage line afforestation, soil and moisture conservation, rain water harvesting, horticulture, and pasture development etc.

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